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NOVEMBER 1, 1919 SERIAL NO. 190

THE MENTOR

JAPANESE PAINTING

By
GARDNER TEALL
Editor and Author

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DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS

VOLUME 7
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THE INFLUENCE OF JAPANESE ART

JAPANESE influence is noticeable in many ways in the arts of the western world. It is most evident in painting. We see it in some of the daring productions of Whistler—his so-called "nocturnes." It is noticeable in the French painter Manet's ambition to see things flat; also in the peculiar space composition of Degas and a number of the poster painters of France and Germany; it can be seen in the parallel vertical lines used by the great French decorative painter, Puvis de Chavannes; and in the parallel horizontal lines in the landscape paintings of the American, D. W. Tryon. We detect a Japanese touch, moreover, in many of the young modern revolutionary illustrators —particularly in their disregard for symmetrical composition and in their fondness for eccentric and grotesque drawing of human figures and of natural objects.

* * *

It is interesting to note that modern painting, just after having succeeded in freeing itself from the fetters of classic art conventions that had checked its development for many years, should go over so completely to the idealistic, and embrace the siren charms of Japanese art. In the pictures of some of the great landscape painters of Japan our artists discovered not only a new and natural choice of subjects, but also a new and natural treatment. They learned to understand and appreciate the "modesty of nature," and to dare to represent it with the simplest means. For the first time, they noted the value of space and how to give effect to landscape by the use of ample, empty spaces. They came to appreciate the grace and force of the silhouette, the effectiveness of unframed compositions, and the beauty of vague, fleeting impressions—also learning the technic of applying unmixed colors and the decorative value obtained therefrom.

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THE MENTOR · DEPARTMENT OF ART
SERIAL NUMBER 190

JAPANESE PAINTING

By GARDNER TEALL, Editor and Author

SAKYAMURRI BUDDHA
By Godoshi (Chinese name, Wu Tao-Tsu) early 8th century

MENTOR GRAVURES

GROUP ON TEMPLE STEPS,
By Fujiwara Nobuzane
FLIGHT OF THE COURT,
By Sumiyosh Keion

LANDSCAPE, By Kano Maranobu
WATERFALL, By Kano Tanyu

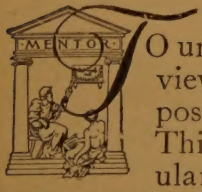
JUROJIN, The Spirit of Longevity,
By Sesshū

SCREEN, By Honnami Koyetsu
TWO PANELS OF FLOWER
SCREEN, By Pawaraya Sotatsu
FLOWER PANEL, By Ogata Kōrin

TIGRESS, By Kishi Chikudo

LADY AND CHERRY TREE,
By Katsushika Hokusai
LADIES IN A GARDEN,
By Kubo Shunman
YEDDO BELLE, By Miyagawa Choshun
HILL OF KIOANNON,
By Ichiryusai Hiroshige

BUDDHIST SAINT
By Ri-riv-min (Chinese name, Li-Lung-mien) 11th century



TO understand the art of a people it is necessary to understand the viewpoint of those that produced it, otherwise it would not be possible to estimate its interest and cultural value intelligently. This is particularly true with the art of the Far East, particularly true of Japanese painting, just as it is true of that of China, whose art inspired and then influenced Japan's. This influence, to a very great degree, either through adoption or adaptation, has extended throughout the whole period of Japanese art history.

Without some special study leading to an appreciation of its conception, Japanese painting is likely to leave the Western mind somewhat bewildered, except for recognition of that certain decorative quality which, in varying degree, wins for it acceptance. On the part of one not informed as to the more profound qualities of Japanese painting, such acceptance is merely a superficial approval and can never prove satisfying until some knowledge of the true inwardness of the subject is acquired.

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China and Korea were potent factors in the development of Japan's civilization. The system of writing by means of ideographs (*pictorial* characters representing *ideas*, as distinguished from *phonetic* characters, or those standing for separate *sounds* grouped to form words) as practiced in these neighboring countries, was one of the elements of the older civilization introduced into Japan. Tradition assigns this innovation to the year A. D. 400. Centuries before, the Chinese had come to regard fine hand-writing (calligraphy) with high esteem, bestowing extraordinary honors and rewards upon master-calligraphers. The ideograph, being indeed a potent picture of a *thought* and not merely the symbol of a *sound*, required in the Chinese mind a painstaking and worthy presentation far removed from scribbling—an attitude that was maintained even after the ideographs evolved from their early pictorial form into conventionalized characters. In China and in Korea calligraphy had come to be highly venerated as almost a sacred art, and, from this regard, there was no departure.*

PORTRAIT OF PRINCE SHOTOKU
By Rose Kanaoka (835-895)
Kanaoka, founder of the Kose School, stands as one of the pre-eminent Japanese artists of all times

It will be seen that the Japanese not only had a system of writing ready at hand to adapt to their own language, but also a strong cultural tradition to receive with its importation—a tradition which they accepted with enthusiasm, as it especially appealed to their own mental alertness and native intellectual receptivity. In connection with Japanese painting this is a matter of importance, since centuries before Chinese painting reached Japan by way of Korea the painter's art was considered by the Chinese to be but the sixth form of the great art of calligraphy, and not as a thing separate and apart from it. Even in the Heian Epoch of Japanese history (A. D. 782–1192) writing and painting were designated by the same Japanese expression, *shogwa*. Many of the same canons or rules determined the qualities of a fine painting or of a fine example of calligraphy,—rhythmic suggestion, vitality, forcefulness, structural character, harmony and contrast were matters as important to the one as to the other. In Japan this held good not only in the pure Chinese mode (*Karayō*) of writing the Chinese characters, but also in the later native "cursive" (sweeping-line) writing,

CRANE AND PLUM
By Sesshū (1420-1506), an artist famous for his Flower-and-Bird subjects

* See Mentor Number 168, "Chinese Painting."

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art

FUNERAL OF A NOBLEMAN

By Tosa Mitsunari (1646-1710), last of the great painters of the Tosa school

such as the graceful *o-ie-fū* (domestic fashion), and the *Kana* characters derived from the Chinese ideographs. Of the last-named characters there are two sorts: the *Katakana* (credited to the inventive genius of Kibi-no-Mabi who died A. D. 776), and the Hiragana (invented by Kōbō Daishi, A. D. 834).

The written language of Japan, like that of China, relied upon the brush for its formation. Forms of pens, although experimentally employed in the past, had been discarded as unworthy of intelligent consideration. Naturally, put to the task early in life, the Japanese acquired extraordinary brush-handling, which served them equally in writing and in painting. Were it not that art is not merely a matter of technic, the wonder would be that there were so few Japanese artists, instead of so many excellent ones. Not only did the early Japanese painter hold the brush in common with the Japanese writer, but painting and calligraphy employed the same materials,—silk or paper for picture or inscription (specially prepared and sized), *sumi* (a black in cake form), vermilion and other water-colors. Oil colors were not employed, although some authorities insist that oil-colors were known to the Japanese at an early date.

BATTLE OF THE BULLS

By Toba Sōjō (1053-1140), best known for his vigorous delineations of actual life

There is a definite inherent strength in what one may call the "thought-picture writing," which must of necessity be lacking in the mere sound suggesting alphabetic writing. So, too, Japanese painting, by reason of its calligraphic origin, is especially distinguished by that inherent strength which, in turn, required for its presentation the Japanese habit of drawing from the

RIVER LANDSCAPE

By Sesshū. "It is the extraordinary mastery of forcible brush-stroke which gives Sesshū his supremacy with the Japanese"

elbow instead of from the wrist. This procedure seems to have made even the slightest line sketch from the hand of a Japanese master intrinsically worthy of preservation, regardless of the sentiment of association. It should be borne in mind that Japanese painters do not employ easels, but spread paper or silk on the floor before them where they sit on heels and knees. Only thus is that complete freedom of arm possible which a Japanese painter cultivates and which makes possible his vital stroke. Occasionally, where an upright surface requires decoration, he stands to his work, translating to the posture as best he can his sitting technic.

SNOWY LANDSCAPE
By Kano Tanyu (1602-1674)

Form of a Japanese Painting

The form of a Japanese painting is one peculiar to Oriental painting. Pictures were not intended, as with Occidentals, to be framed and constantly hung in a certain place on the wall year after year. Originally they were rarely framed at all, but mounted as *makimono* (rolls often 11 to 45 feet in length and from 10 to 18 inches in width), or as *kakemono* (scrolls of various sizes for unrolling and occasional hanging, picture-wise, upon the wall of the alcove of a room). Japanese paintings are regarded by their owners more in the manner in which we hold rare literary treasures,—things to be brought forth now and then and carefully hidden away again. The *makimono* is unrolled and inspected a little at a time. Custom prescribes that one, two or three *kakemono* may be displayed in a single room at one and the same time, and not more. The bewildering array of paintings on the walls of some occidental houses has no counterpart in the Japanese home of good tradition. Rigid rules likewise have always attended the mounting of *kakemono*, and classic convention specified the width of the brocade borders and the proportion of the panels, as well as of the materials employed.*

A WATERFALL
By Kano Tanyu

Folding-screen (*Biyobu*) and standing-screen (*Tsuitate*) are also important forms of paintings. While such limitations as to materials and forms may strike one at first as cramping, it will be seen to what extent they were not, when the viewpoint of the Japanese artist in regard to a painting is further considered.

From the first, the Japanese painter did not concern himself with the mere aspect of things. He sought to attune himself to what has been called the universal harmony of spiritual things, and he sought,

* See William Anderson's "Pictorial Arts of Japan," Part I, pp. 116-120, explaining the *kakemono* in detail.

in turn, to become possessed by this spirituality and to present some indication of this elevation of spirit in his art. Poetic interpretation and not photographic presentment was his endeavor. His art united the *elements* of a picture so as to effect the impression of a *whole* idea. He did not seek to focus attention on a particular object in a picture as the Western painter often does. The "all-effect" conveying the "all-idea" characterizes Japanese painting. For instance, if the Japanese artist were painting a landscape in which majestically towering mountains were shown in the distance, he would infuse in the objects of his foreground something of the same spiritual significance that marked his delineation of the distant pinnacles. If his subject were, for instance, "A Solitary Riverside,"—a favorite one, by the way,—the delineation of the riverside would not compel chief attention, but would merely make part of the whole sense of solitude with which the painter wished to invest his theme. Every stroke of his brush would be expressive of this intention. So, too, were he to set about to depicting a sage deep in contemplation, supreme effort would not be lavished on the wise man's features in order to convey the theme through this single means to the beholder. Instead, every brush-stroke would be vibrant with sympathy for the subject as a whole, with the result that the spirit of contemplation would appear as if by magic to pervade the scene. It is not often that Western art has been equal to this accomplishment.

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art

THREE FIGURES

By Nishigawa Sukenobu (1674-1754), a painter especially noted for scenes from the life and occupations of women, done in color prints

DARUMA

By Kano Sanraku (1573-1635) the most gifted pupil of Yeitoku, of the Kano school

FALCON ON PINE BRANCH

By Soga Chokuan (16th century)

The Subjective Quality

A passionate love of nature, which seems to be an immemorable heritage, marks the Japanese people. When a Japanese artist paints a landscape he does not wish to portray something external to himself, but to bring forth from his inner consciousness something that is part of himself: in this instance a landscape

SIX-FOLD FLOWER SCREEN, GOLD GROUND

By Kōrin (1661-1716), the most important figure in that group of decorative painters to which his name has been given

memory, founded on his impressions and enhanced by spiritual contemplation. Japanese painting is distinctly *subjective*. That is to say, it presents something drawn from the artist's own consciousness and not, as is almost entirely the case with Western painting, something entirely concerned with external appearances, however much these external appearances may evoke inner thought on the part of the beholder. In this difference between *subjective* art and *objective* art lies the fundamental difference between the art of the Japanese painter and the art of the painters of the Western world.

CHERRY TREE IN BLOSSOM

By Kōrin

Japanese painting, being subjective, does not concern itself particularly with portraiture in the manner of the objective art of the Occident. When he does turn to portraiture, the Japanese painter considers accuracy of facial form (external resemblance) of least importance. Western art appears to regard the human figure as its noblest theme. Japanese art gives it no such precedence. In Japanese painting all forms are held in equal esteem (or are given equal attention in portrayal), with that of the human figure—trees, flowers, birds, animals, mountains and rocks, and other inanimate objects. If these things have no souls, at least the Japanese painter attempts to attribute to them some suggestion of his own spirituality, and gives forth something finer, perhaps, than he absorbs. On the other hand, he may, occasionally, have chosen to leave things as he found them,—a tiger simply a tiger, a viper a viper. The Japanese painter has absolute command of what we call realism when he chooses to use it, and a manner of working infinitely capable of depicting it. But realism is, in its essence, objective and Japanese painting is not, although Japanese art also has had its realistic movements, just as Western art has had its impressionistic schools.

FISHES

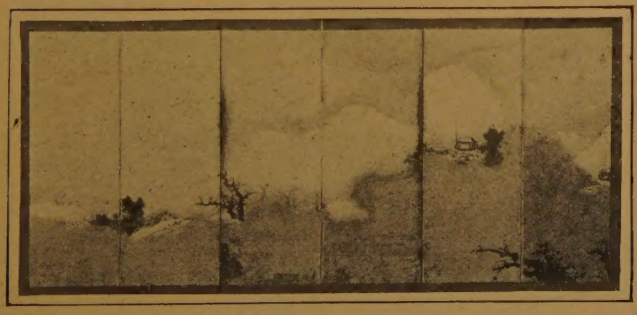
By Toko (18th century), a master in the difficult art of painting fish

Painting and Poetry

KWANNON, A DEITY OF MERCY
By Okyo Maruyama (1733-1795). "A hand which had almost miraculous control of the brush was at the service of a vision of exquisite lucidity"

"Poetry," said Joubert, "is to be found nowhere unless we carry it within us." Bishop Ken observed, "It is thought in blossom," reminding one of Coleridge's, "Poetry is the blossom and the fragrance of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language." So, too, was art in the mind of the Japanese painter. There is, indeed, a true kinship between Japanese painting and poetry. In Oriental art this kinship is more immediately in evidence and more emphasized than in the art of the Occident. Time and again the Japanese painter goes to the poets for his themes, as did the painters of China. Often, too, we find beautiful poems placed on the paintings themselves, thus bearing out the saying that poetry and painting go hand in hand. Many Japanese painters were poets, many Japanese poets were painters. Japanese painting like Japanese poetry is inspired by nature, likewise concerns itself with subtle allusions by means of emblems, symbols and the like. It takes but a little intellectual spark to fire the tinder of the Japanese imagination. Literalism to such minds is commonplaceness. Just how delightfully imaginative one might become is shown in the story of the great Japanese painter, Kano Motonobu (1476—1559), who, when painting cranes, would spend his evenings imitating their movements and postures as nearly as possible in order to absorb what one may call the crane-idea. We may admit this to be extreme, but we must concede interest in the enthusiasm that inspired it.

Although truly marvelous in aerial perspective and often remarkable in foreshortening, *chiaroscuro* (contracted light and shade in painting—such as characterizes a Rembrandt, for instance), was deliberately avoided in Japanese painting. Ground perspective was more frequently disregarded than not. Even though its laws were not left out of consideration in all instances it was never followed out in scientific detail. Indeed, Japanese painting was never in the thrall of scientific curiosity such as molded the art of



LANDSCAPE SCREEN
By Toyokei, a pupil of Maruyama Okyō

the Italian Renaissance and thus influenced all that followed, or which sought to impress the love of realism that made the art of the Dutch painters the example for schools that were to come after. The Japanese painter has shown us that there is something more to a picture than correct anatomy, exact perspective and perfect *chiaroscuro*. In truth we have learned from Japanese art that a noble painting need not of necessity possess these three attributes which have, more or less, been the fetich of Western art. There have, of course, been extremes in both the art of the Orient and that of the Occident, but Japanese painting has not striven to simulate arts other than its own, having been content within its own limits. The Japanese painter, for instance, has left to the Japanese sculptor the province of things "in the round," not seeking through painted illusion to attain the effects that are actualities in a piece of statuary. On the other hand, the old masters and their followers sought to attain a lifelikeness for their works through emulating appearances of the rounded form.

Thus it will be seen that the viewpoint of the Japanese painter differs widely from that of Western painters. Nevertheless, this Japanese viewpoint is one that is easily understood. When clearly revealed, it holds many attractions whose structural aspects can hardly fail to make strong appeal to the Western intelligence and to evoke our enthusiasm.

TWO LADIES AND CHILD WITH RABBIT ON A TRAY

By Isoda Kōriusai (late 18th century), an artist especially distinguished for his color-prints

Breadth of Subject

The Japanese painter is not limited in the choice of subject. We find him engaged with (*a*) Religious subjects, (most strongly under Chinese influence); (*b*) Landscape, (idealistic rather than realistic); (*c*) Historical and Mythological

MONKEYS

Two panels by Mori Sosen (1747-1821)

MONKEY WITH YOUNG
By Mori Sosen

TIGRESS
By Kishi Ganku, who lived from about 1745 to 1834. He acquired great fame as a painter of tigers, and his "handling of the wet brush, full of color, is unsurpassed"

subjects, (somewhat closer to nature when we have examined the costume, habits and customs contemporary with them than at first appears to be the case); (*d*) Figure pieces and Portraits, (with little concern for facial similitude); (*e*) Genre (every-day life and manners), Flowers-and-Birds,—*Kwa-Cho*, (subjects often extremely realistic), and (*f*) Animals (variously treated). Besides, there exists for him an unusually rich store of native myths, legends and allusions such as the artists of the West have never known, although, on the whole, Western painters have made comparatively meager use of what they have had. With the Japanese almost every thing is regarded as an emblem, and symbols are plentiful. Were a Western painter to select old age as the theme for a picture, he would probably portray an aged man seated in a chair, newspaper in his lap, head bent in slumber, or looking out of the window with dim, wistful eyes. It might not even occur to the Western painter to introduce a spring landscape as subtle contrast,—the youth of the year. More likely a meaningless vista would be disclosed through the open window. The same theme of old age would receive quite different treatment at the hands of a Japanese painter. In all likelihood he would select for its suggestion some such subject as one finds in Sesshū's "Crane and Plum." A Japanese picture-lover would readily appreciate the suggestion that since the Crane is regarded as the emblem of Longevity and the Plum is also accepted as an emblem of Longevity honorable old age might reasonably and poetically be hinted at in such a conception, and the wish implied that they may attend the life of the painting's possessor. In this connection it may be noted that a knowledge of national legendary lore is a part of the mental equipment of every Japanese who can read and write.

PEACOCKS AND PEONIES
By Tani Bunchō (1763-1848)
Bunchō was a noted painter of Nature pieces, painted in tones of blue and green

The Aesthetics of Japanese Painting

"One of the most important principles in the art of Japanese painting," writes an eminent authority, "is that called 'living movement,' it being, so to say, the transfusion into the work of the nature of the thing to be painted by the artist. Whatever the subject to be translated —whether river or tree, rock or mountain, bird or flower, fish or animal —the artist at the moment of painting it must feel its very nature, which, by the magic of his art, he transfers into his work to remain forever, affecting all who see it with the same sensations he experienced when executing it.

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art
SHOKI, THE DEMON QUELLER
By Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849)

"This is not an imaginary principle, but a strictly enforced law of Japanese painting. The student is incessantly admonished to observe it. Should his subject be a tree, he is urged when painting it to feel the strength which shoots through the branches and sustains the limbs. Or, if a flower, to try to feel the grace with which it expands or bows its blossoms. Indeed, nothing is more constantly urged upon his attention than this great underlying principle, that it is impossible to express in art what one does not first feel. The Romans taught their actors that they must first weep if they would move others to tears. The Greeks certainly understood the principle, else how did they successfully invest with imperishable life their creations in marble?

"In Japan the highest compliment to an artist is to say he paints with his soul, his brush following the dictates of his spirit.

"The Japanese artist is taught that even to the placing of a dot in the eyeball of a tiger he must first feel the savage, cruel, feline character of the beast, and only under such influence should he apply the brush. If he paint a storm, he must at the moment realize passing over him the very tornado which tears up trees from their roots and houses from their foundations. Should he depict the seacoast with its cliffs and moving waters, at the moment of putting the wave-bound rocks into the picture he must feel that they are being placed there to resist the fiercest movement of the ocean, while to the waves in turn he must give an irresistible power to carry all before them; thus, by this senti-

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art
LADY ADMIRING CHERRY TREE FROM A VERANDAH
By Moromasa (18th century)

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art

FIGHTING COCKS By Katsushika Hokusai

ment, called living movement, reality is imparted to the inanimate object. This is one of the marvelous secrets of Japanese painting, handed down from the great Chinese painters and based on psychological principles—matter responsive to mind. Chikudo, the celebrated tiger painter, studied and pondered so long over the savage expression in the eye of the tiger in order to reproduce its fierceness that, it is related, he became at one time mentally unbalanced, but his paintings of tigers are inimitable.

"From what has been said it will be appreciated why, in a Japanese painting, so much value is attached to the strength with which the brush strokes are executed, to the varying lights and shades of the *sumi*, to their play and sheen, and to the manifestation of the artist's power according to the principle of living movement. In a European painting such considerations have no place.

"An oil painting can be rubbed out and done over time and again until the artist is satisfied. An ink painting must be executed at once and for all time and without hesitation, and no corrections are permissible or possible. Any brush stroke painted over a second time, results in a smudge; the life has left it. All corrections show when the ink dries.

"Japanese artists are not bound down to the presentation of things seen. They have a canon, called *esoragoto*, which means, literally, an invented picture or a picture into which certain fictions are painted.

"Every painting to be effective must be *esoragoto;* that is, there must enter therein certain artistic liberties which should aim not so much to reproduce the exact thing as its sentiment, called *kokoro mochi*, which is the moving spirit of the scene. It must not be a fac-simile."

LANDSCAPE: FARMHOUSE NEAR OSAKA

"Painted on paper with vigorous impressionistic force."

By Nishiyama Hoyen (died about 1865)

SUPPLEMENTARY READING

ON THE LAWS OF JAPANESE PAINTING
By Henry P. Bowie

PAINTING IN THE FAR EAST
By Laurence Binyon

EPOCHS OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE ART
By Ernest F. Fenollosa

THE SPIRIT OF JAPANESE ART
By Yone Noguchi

*** Information concerning the above books may be had on application to the Editor of The Mentor.

THE OPEN LETTER

The Japanese are essentially an art loving people. The very atmosphere in which they are born and brought up makes them so. The art feeling is engendered in a child in early age and his first elementary training is artistic in quality. When a Japanese mother shows her young hopeful how to hold and handle the chop-sticks, she has given him what is, in fact, a preparatory lesson in the use of the paint brush. As soon as the child becomes adept in the use of the chop-sticks, he engages himself in exercises of skill, such as picking up and manipulating single grains of rice and other tiny objects. In cultivating dexterity of this sort, the child is unconsciously learning how to handle the "double-brush," with which accomplished Japanese artists lay on color with one brush and dilute or shade off the color with the other—both brushes being held in the same hand at the same time. When a Japanese child is sent to school, at six years of age, he learns to write with a brush the 47 phonetic signs. These signs, which are employed in writing, represent the 47 pure sounds of the Japanese language. They are called "*Katakana*" and are simplified forms based on Chinese characters. With these signs any Japanese word can be written. In the course of a year or more, a child learns to write these characters from memory. Then he turns to the study of the same sounds as they are represented in a different and much more ornamental script, which is called "*Hiragana*." The signs of *Hiragana* are curved, rounded and graceful, while the *Katakana* signs are more or less square. In the course of two or three years, a child has gained complete mastery of the two kinds of *kana* and is skilful in writing with the brush all the Japanese language signs.

* * *

This information concerning the early education of Japanese children—and much more of interest, besides, bearing on Japenses art—is to be found in Mr. Henry P. Bowie's book "On the Laws of Japanese Painting." Attention has often been called to the influence of Japanese art on the painters of the Western World. We detect it in the work of a number of American artists. Mr. Bowie is unique in that the Japanese influence affected him to such an extent that it completely made him its own, so that he gave up nine years of his life exclusively to study in Japan. He finally acquired a mastery of the principles of Japanese art and a technical facility in expressing them that won for him a distinguished position among Japanese painters. The story of Mr. Bowie's experience in Japan has not, I believe, its like in the history of art. Art connoisseurs in Japan, have credited Mr. Bowie with having even a fuller knowledge and appreciation of Japanese art matters than many of the cultivated Japanese. His reputation, we are told, spread far and wide over Japan and requests for his paintings came in such numerous quantities that his time was continuously occupied.

* * *

The story of his extraordinary absorption of the art of a nation not his own is well told by one of his greatest Japanese masters, Hirai Kinza. "In 1894, Mr. Bowie came to me in Kyoto," wrote Kinza. "He requested that I instruct him in the Japanese language and in the Chinese written characters. I consented and began his instruction. I was soon astonished by his extraordinary progress and could hardly believe his language and writing were not those of a native Japanese. As for the Chinese written characters, we learn them only to know their meaning and are not accustomed to investigate their hidden significance; but Mr. Bowie went so thoroughly into the analysis of their forms, strokes and pictorial values that his knowledge of the same often astounded and silenced my own countrymen. In addition to this, having undertaken to study Japanese painting, he placed himself under one of our most celebrated artists and, daily working with unabated zeal, in a comparatively short time, made marvelous progress in that art. At one of our public art expositions he exhibited a painting of pigeons flying across a bamboo grove which was greatly admired and praised by everyone, and no one could believe that this was the work of a foreigner. At the conclusion of the exposition he was awarded a diploma attesting his merit. Many were the persons who coveted the painting, but as it had been originally offered to me, I still possess it. From time to time I refresh my eyes with the work and with much pleasure exhibit it to my friends. Frequently after this Mr. Bowie, always engaged in painting remarkable pictures in the Japanese manner, would exhibit them at the various art exhibitions of Japan, and was on two occasions specially honored by our Emperor and Empress, both of whom expressed the wish to possess his work, and Mr. Bowie had the honor of offering the same to our Imperial Majesties."

W. D. Moffat

EDITOR

JAPANESE painting has passed through various phases. During the *Pre-Nara Period*, which extended to A. D. 708, painting in Japan was exotic and was in the hands of Korean and Chinese Buddhist teachers. We know little of Japanese art during this period. The *Nara Period*, which ran from 708 to 793, found painting lagging behind the advance of the arts of sculpture, architecture, metal working and lacquering. Chinese painting in this period was the most conspicuous influence on Japanese art—due to the direct relations with the Chinese Empire that were established when Nara, as the new capital of Japan, became the center of arts and letters.

The *Heian Period* (794–1183) developed evidences of an original feeling and touch in Japanese painting. While Chinese influence endured, a native expression crept into the painting of the time, which gathered force later through the hands of great Japanese native masters. The first of these was the painter Kosé no Kanaoka (835–895). He was the founder of the Kosé School, which held somewhat to the Chinese style and traditions. Some years later appeared the great Tosa Taunetaka, creator of the art of the Tosa School, Kasuga Motomitsu, founder of the Kasuga School, and Takuma Tameuji, creator of the Takuma School. The Tosa School was noted for its originality, the Takuma School for deliberate Chinese style. These three schools finally coalesced and the resulting styles, which retained the virtues of the separate schools and added to them the Japanese delicacy and other national characteristics, became known as *Yamato* or National Art.

This brings us to the *Kamakura Period* (A. D. 1183-1332), in which we find a Japanese national art fully developed. The long roll-paintings (called *Kakimono*) were especially popular in this period. Nobuzane's painting "Group on Temple Steps," reproduced on the other side of this sheet, is a detail part of a long roll-painting of this period. In this roll-painting, which is colored in tints that range through all shades of dull rose, mauve and olive, with additions of dark blue, fawn and gold, Nobuzane has presented to us, with extraordinary power, a sketch of real life during his time (1177–1265), that illuminates the traditional sedateness of this art period with a blaze of truthfulness. Nobuzane was renowned especially for his portraits, in which branch of painting he employed lighter tones. As a portrait painter he stood without rival during his period.

"Flight of the Court," a fragment of a roll-painting by Sumiyoshi Keion, also reproduced here, is another distinguished example of the Yamato School. Keion has been called the greatest Japanese painter. This superb roll-painting is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts collection, so that it is accessible to American art lovers. It depicts an incident of the Heiji War. "Keion is no such impressionist as Nobuzane," says Fenollosa, "he is more sane and business-like. But in his stupendous massing of crowded line into totality of motion, there is no one who approaches him . . . he is the greatest painter of battle-pieces—the central deeds of violence in all Japan's military history, the mighty struggle out of whose tearing asunder his own and his contemporaries' individuality arose on light wing . . . Photographs of the Russo-Japanese War give no such vivid idea as he does of the Japanese Military Soul."

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GROUP ON TEMPLE STEPS

DETAIL OF A ROLL-PAINTING BY FUJIWARA NOBUZANE

FLIGHT OF THE COURT

DETAIL OF A ROLL-PAINTING BY SUMIYOSH KEION

YAMATO-TOSA SCHOOL

THE Kano School was founded by Kano Masanobu (1453-1490) and was carried on by his son, Kano Motonobu (1476-1559). In continuing the Kano tradition in art, the son was greater than the father. It was a period when connoisseurship in Japanese art reached a very high point and noted art critics, such as So-ami, Shin-gei and Shin-no, laid down the principles of Japanese art criticism. The landscape by Kano Masanobu, reproduced herewith, reveals the artist's rare poetic imagination and his delicacy in modulating various tones. It presents a strong contrast to the brush strokes of the Sesshū School, of which examples are shown in this number of The Mentor. A certain straight formality of the brush line distinguishes the Kano art. This landscape, which belonged to Prince Kinoshita, and which was copied by Kano Yasunobu, is perhaps Masanobu's greatest landscape, and is certainly not inferior to any of those painted by the celebrated Sesshū. From the critics' standpoint, it is specially praiseworthy for the masterly presentment of the law of spacing. It is beautifully balanced in its spaces and in its tones of color. Altogether, the painting shows fine art understanding and superb ability in technical execution.

The Waterfall picture by Kano Tanyu (1602–1674) is of great interest as a copy by a celebrated Japanese painter of a picture executed by a prominent Chinese landscapist of the Sung Dynasty. It is highly idealistic in its feeling. After the great fire in Kyoto, which destroyed countless masterpieces of both Chinese and Japanese painters, Kano Tanyu set about making faithful transcripts of such works as remained. The Shogun borrowed all the paintings in the possession of various notable collectors of the city, and Kano Tanyu and his brother, Kano Naonobu (1607–1680) were commissioned to copy them. Fenollosa considered Ksia Kuei, the Chinese originator of this picture, the greatest landscape artist of China, and as great, if not greater, than any Chinese or Japanese follower.

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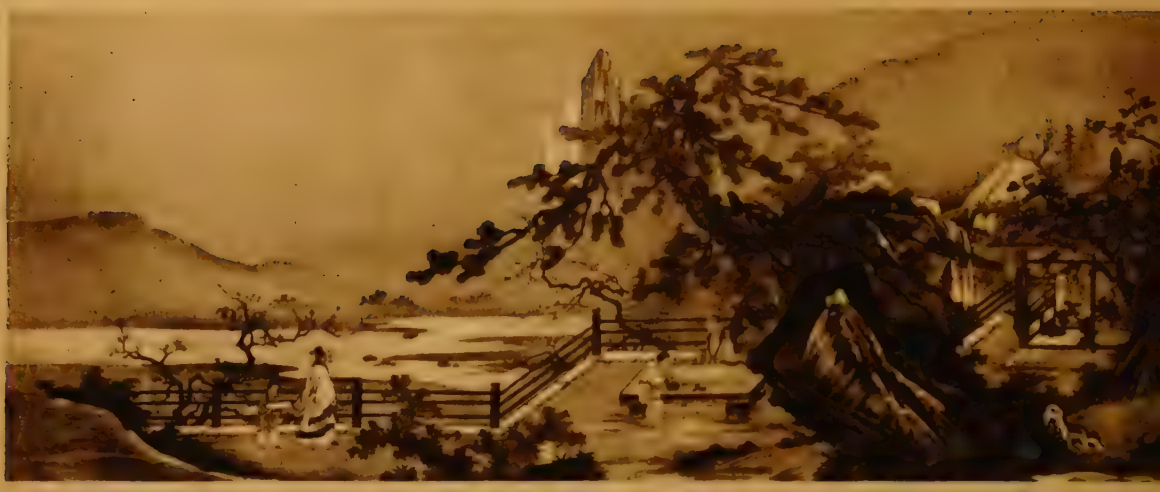

LANDSCAPE, BY KANO MARANOBU

WATERFALL, BY KANO TANYU

OPIED FROM A PAINTING BY THE CHINESE ARTIST KAKEI (HSIA KUEI)

KANO SCHOOL

THREE

SESSHŪ stands forth as the greatest painter of the whole *Ashikaga* (or *Higashiyama*) *Period* (1333–1574) in Japanese estimation. His art is almost entirely subjective; that is, expressive, not of external things, but of his own inner self. Color is lightly employed by him, and is often completely absent. "Even those unused to Oriental art," says Binyon, "can appreciate such a painting as Sesshū's 'Jurojin,' the genius of immortal old age, a hoary figure, bowed with the weight and wise with the wisdom of uncounted years, gazing out from the intricate branches of blossoming spring trees while the mysterious fawn that companions his solitude rubs its head across his knee. No one can fail to be impressed by the sense of simpleness and sublimity in this imaginative conception, by the majesty of design and power of execution. This is indeed one of the central masterpieces of the art of Japan. . . . As Homer among the poets of Greece, so is Sesshū among the painters of his country."

Of this same "Jurojin" Fenollosa writes: "Some of his (Sesshū's) roughest works are all executed in hardly more than two strokes. On the other hand, his finest figure piece is a most elaborate Jurojin in color upon silk, which apparently he executed for the Ming Emperor in China. At least, this great painting, which is now the chief treasure of Marquis Hachisuba's collection, has a romantic history. It was brought back from the palace of the Korean king by Kata Kiyomasa, after his troops had occupied Seul about 1595. The supposition is that it had been presented to the king by the Chinese Emperor. On the other hand, we know that Yoshimana was in close correspondence with the King of Korea about the time that Sesshū went to Ming (China). The picture bears the signature 'Sesshū' so that, if it antedates the return from Ming, it disproves the legend concerning the name (Sesshū—'Ship of Snow,' derived from the incident of the quantities of white paper and silk showered upon Sesshū by Chinese nobles when he sailed from China on his return to Japan). . . . This is Sesshū's most elaborate figure piece, both in minuteness and fulness of line and in color. Its symbolism, too, is mostly of the setting, giving the spirit of Longevity its least abstract meaning, and its most poetic potency. For here, we may say, is nature personified, the same old, old mysterious, kindly nature, thousands, nay, tens of thousands of years old, the spirit of life, young, too, though it be old, blossoming ever anew every spring into eternal freshness and beauty. It is Merlin entangled with the very enchantments he weaves; the incredibly old face smiling like a wise St. Nicholas; *Natura naturans*. I have compared and contrasted it with Botticelli's idea of Flora, Vitality as a gay young maid, decked with and embowered in the rose nature she exhales; but in this Chinese conception we have added the elements of eternity, and of the kindly wisdom of the happily aged. . . . The far-away smile seems almost worthy of Da Vinci. Here indeed is a supreme artistic flowering of Zen thought."

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JUROJIN, THE SPIRIT OF LONGEVITY, BY SESSHŪ

SESSHŪ SCHOOL

THE *Koyetsu-Korin School*, more commonly called the Korin School, developed along extraordinary original decorative lines. Honnami Koyetsu (1557-1637) was the founder of the school, and Ogata Korin (1661-1716) was its best known exponent. The third giant of the trio of great decorative painters is Tawaraya Sotatsu (17th century) about whose life little is known. Moreover, his painting has not had all the attention it deserves, having been overshadowed by the fame of Korin, to whom, in many instances, the works of the other two masters have been credited. Koyetsu was perhaps the greatest artist of the period (certainly a master of lacquer painting). Fenollosa says of the screen reproduced herewith: "It represents the lateral flow across the six panels of a river in low-toned cream and silver. The lines of this flow are conceived on the grandest scale. The ground through which the river flows is warm brownish paper spotted with tarnished silver. A note of accent is given near the center of the lower edge by a rock in dull tones of olive and copper. Across this ground ascend, nearly vertically, two chief masses of growth: on the right a strong magnolia tree in deep browns, olives and dark warm yellows and soft river grasses in a scrambled cream lighter than the river; on the left an *icho* tree with its autumn fan-leaves of cadmium, combined with a full-leaved maple that shades into dull scarlet and cream. A few very softly massed shrubs in pale brownish-olive arise in the center of the middle distance from the river border and right in the center of this mass a single large wild carnation blooms of an indescribable low pink. This one little spot centers the whole muffled autumn coloring of the screen. The line tangle on the right, of magnolias, carnations, river and grasses . . . rises in grandeur of pure spacing. . . . . The purity and loftiness of both line and color come out in perfect combination."

Tawaraya Sotatsu, the creator of the two paintings of a flower screen, produced most original works of great decorative and impressionistic beauty. Sotatsu, according to Fenollosa, is "less creatively imaginative than Koyetsu (1557–1637), less forcing nature to subserve his gigantic schemes of line and color. He is more passive in his study of nature, letting his compositions take just the groupings which stem, leaves and blossoms would assume. . . . Even the most minute plants have lavished upon them a wealth of loving care which we ordinarily reserve for our portraits. The wealth of color in the great crimson and scarlet double poppies is indescribable."

Ogata Korin's flower panel is an exquisite example of the clear, definite and sure touch of the artist. No painter in the world's history, remarks a critic, has so daringly reduced his subjects to his own conventions without, for an instant, losing poetic art feeling. There is no vagueness and little illusion in Korin's work. It is bold and simple in expression and highly effective.

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MAIZE, MAGNOLIA AND ICHO SCREEN, BY HONNAMI KŌYETSU

TWO PANELS OF A FLOWER SCREEN, BY TAWARAYA SOTATSU

FLOWER PANEL, BY OGATA KŌRIN

HOKUSAI and Hiroshige are the most widely known of the Ukiyoye School. The color-prints of both are familiar to all art lovers in America and Europe. The painting of these masters still remains to be familiarized to us, although our museum and private collections happily contain some fine pieces by both of these remarkable masters. From 1828 to 1830, says Fenollosa, Hokusai "seems to have said to himself that it was time for him to come out from his debauch of sketches and prove to the world that he could produce great finished paintings; he crowded his silks with carefully drawn and heavily colored figures; his landscape backgrounds are rich and full. In line, too, he made new experiments, utterly overcoming the broken, awkward daubs of his transition period, and retiring to well-ordered sweeps of drapery so fine and new that we are almost persuaded that a new Kiyonaga (1742–1815) is coming. . . . From 1830 to 1840 Hokusai entered into his solitary inheritance of deep-toned prints and paintings, having heavy yellows and green blues for their foundation. His mannerism is complete . . . he is fond of painting great screens. . . . The last ten years of his life (1840–1849) . . . his style becomes heavier and darker, letting the big broken strokes that should be his lines become only rough depths in his massive darks. It is his strongest and broadest style since his Sori period (1798–1800—technic of Sotatsu), but much more blocky in texture: that is, his color is put on crumbly and dry as if with chunks of charcoal, instead of with wet silvery washes. In paintings Hokusai always recorded his age after his eightieth year. He adopted the name 'Gwakiojin-man'; and generally used it with a seal that depicts Fuji mountain. During the last few years of his life he changed the seal to one which shows the character for 'hundred.'"

Fenollosa dates the "Lady and Cherry Tree in Blossom" as being a work of 1818. But this dating may require reconsideration. Binyon says, "It is this frank and joyous acceptance of the world as it is which attracts modern Europe to Hokusai. It chimes with the prevailing temper of our day. Yet if we turn back to an earlier page of art, to Yeitoku, to So-Ami, to Nobuzane, we feel at once that something has been lost. Old and effete conventions, many will say, which it was Hokusai's glory to supersede. But the loss is much more than that. . . . The work of the older masters may seem slight and limited compared with his; yet theirs is a world of finer senses, of subtler emotions, of more serious soul." And again: "I have no doubt that a great many people of to-day really and at heart rank the human interest, the lively and genial observations of a Dickens above the majesty of a Milton. I confess myself of the contrary opinion; I confess, too, that some of the old Chinese pictures have given me deeper and more intimate pleasure than even the splendid masterpieces of Hokusai. Yet masterpieces these are. If we have to make detractions from Hokusai, we have to make them too from giants like Rubens in painting, giants like Byron in literature. Some last charm, some final loveliness is absent. But on the other hand, how would life be power without the exultant and for us the exhilarating power of these tremendous personalities!"

Hiroshige (1797–1858), says Binyon, "is less concerned with the stable rudiments of earth than with the beauties of their veiling by the atmosphere and changing light. No one has revealed to us so freshly the beauty of rain; rain showering like light javelins that shine in the returning sun, or mingling with the mist and with the wind that bends and tosses a long ridge of blotted pines, or descending in straight rods that hiss on ground or water, or trailing delicate threads that caress the trembling willows. . . . Of all Japanese artists Hiroshige is the one whose influence has been widest on the painting of the West. This influence, however, was conveyed through Hiroshige's color-prints, as the Western world knows little of his painting. Sei-ichi Taki, a native Japanese critic, writes: Hiroshige "inaugurated a new style of landscape painting peculiarly Japanese: this he formed by availing himself of the essential attributes of Chinese art developed by Buson and other well-known masters. Laying his hand on the previously neglected themes of native scenes, he travelled far and wide and sketched the noted bits of scenery in his country, while the landscapists of the Chinese School refrained from depicting Japanese scenery. The beauty about him is that he never labored over trivial details, but always kept his eye on the rendering of scenes in their broad and general aspect."

"Ladies in Garden" by Kuno Shunman (1757–1820) is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Kiyonaga's work exerted great influence on that of Shunman, but Shunman retained his own poetic vision. Some of Shunman's color-prints possess rare beauty and as a color-print artist he is more intimately known to art lovers in general as, of course, was Kiyonaga.

Miyagawa Choshun's "Yedo Belle," pictured on the reverse side, is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Choshun (1682–1752) is ranked by Japanese critics as perhaps the best of all the Ukiyoye painters. He was a delightful colorist.

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LADY AND CHERRY TREE.
BY KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI

LADIES IN A GARDEN.
BY KUBO SHUNMAN

YEDDO BELLE.
BY MIYAGAWA CHOSHUN

HILL OF KIOANNON ON THE KISOKAIDO. BY ICHIRYUSAI HIROSHIGE

UKIYOYE SCHOOL

THE Ganku School was founded by Kishi Ganku (1745–1834). This brings Japanese painting down into the 19th century, in which there arose a modern spirit that developed with succeeding years. Besides the Ganku School, a Neo-Chinese School of painting came into favor, in which Tani Buncho (1736-1840) was a prominent figure. This was followed by the great Ukiyoye School, or "Popular School" of painting, which carried many artists before it. It was for the people that the Ganku and the Ukiyoye artists painted, especially the latter, and they sacrificed tradition to effect at all times. Their brushes were far more concerned with scenes of the theater, which had become a passion with the populace, than with idealistic visions and poetic dreaming fancies. Style never departed from it, for style seems natural with the Japanese. However, although Ganku and Ukiyoye art came to occupy a prominent place in the public eye, the older schools have had their faithful followers, and continue to have them to this day, in spite of Japanese contact with western nations.

Of Japanese painting following the year 1868 it may be said that up to about 1882 it was in chaos. From 1882 to about 1896 followed a period of reaction, while the years thence onward have entered into a sort of transition period from which it is believed something worthy will emerge. In these later years numerous Japanese artists have turned their attention vigorously to oil painting, but as yet no distinguished master has risen to show the superiority of oil painting in Japanese hands.

Kishi Chikudo's great "Tigress" painting, reproduced on the other side of this sheet, is a splendid example of the Ganku School. It was one of the Japanese paintings exhibited at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. Chikudo was of the fourth generation of the Shijo School, Ganku branch. He was the adopted son of Renzan, the son-in-law of the great animal painter, Ganku, founder of the special Kyoto school which came to bear his name. Fenollosa notes that a large number of the designs for embroideries and cut velvets done by Nishi-mura, Kawashima and Iida have come out of the studios of Burin and Chikudo.

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THE TIGRESS, BY KISHI CHIKUDO

GANKU SCHOOL

How Art is Taught in Japan

IN all Japanese schools the rudiments of art are taught, and children are trained to perceive, feel and enjoy what is beautiful in nature. There is no city, village or hamlet in all Japan that does not contain its plantations of plum and cherry blossoms in spring, its peonies and lotus ponds in summer, its chrysanthemums in autumn, and camelias, mountain roses and red berries in winter. The school children are taken time and again to see these, and revel amongst them. It is a part of their education. Excursions, called *undokai,* are organized at stated intervals during the school term and the scholars gaily tramp to distant parts of the country, singing patriotic and other songs the while, and enjoying the view of the waterfalls, broad and winding rivers, autumn maples, or snow-capped mountains. In addition to this, trips are taken to all famous temples and historical places, including, where conveniently near, the three great views of Japan—Matsushima, Ama No Hashi Date, and Myajima. Thus a taste for landscape is inculcated and becomes second nature. Furthermore, the scholars are encouraged to watch closely every form of life, including butterflies, crickets, beetles, birds, goldfish, shellfish, and the like; and I have seen miniature landscape gardens made by Japanese children most cleverly reproducing charming views and contained in a shallow box or tray. This gentle little art is called *Bonsai* or *hako niwa.*

My purpose in alluding to all this is to indicate that a boy leaving school has absorbed already much artistic education and is fairly well equipped for beginning a special course in the art schools of the empire. These schools differ in their methods of instruction, and many changes have been introduced in them during the present reign, or Meiji period, but substantially the course takes from three to four years and embraces copying, tracing, reducing and composing. . . .

* * *

The art student having completed his course is now qualified to attach himself to some of the great artists, into whose household he will be admitted and whose *deshi* or art disciple he becomes from that time on. The relation between such master (*sensei*) and his pupil (*deshi*) is the most kindly imaginable. Indeed, *deshi* is a very beautiful word, meaning younger brother, and was first applied to the Buddhist disciples of Shakka. The master treats him as one of his family and the pupil reveres the master as his divinity. Greater mutual regard and affection exists nowhere and many pupils remain more or less attached to the master's household until his death. To the most faithful and skilful of these, the master bestows or bequeaths his name or a part of it, or his *nom de plume* and thus it is that the celebrated schools (Ruygi, or Ha or Fu) of Japanese painting have been formed and perpetuated, beginning with Kanaoka, Tosa, Kano and Okyo, and brought down to posterity through the devoted, and I might say sacred efforts of their pupils, to preserve the methods and traditions of those great men. Pupils of the earlier painters took their masters' family names, which accounts for so many Tosas and Kanos.

From "On the Laws of Japanese Painting," by Henry P. Bowie.

They Like Them All

A SHORT time ago we sent out a letter to the members of The Mentor Association, in which we asked readers to tell us what Mentors they liked best, and what subjects interested them most. The object of this questionnaire was to find out just what fields of knowledge were the preferred ones and what numbers of The Mentor were most interesting and instructive. The replies have been so uniformly favorable that most of them could be summed up in the single statement, "We like *all* The Mentors." This, of course, is very encouraging and stimulating—and what gratifies us most is the assurance in the letters that we are giving a valuable service to thousands of teachers and pupils. If we are a real benefit in the schoolroom, and, at the same time, we interest and delight the reader in the library, the club, and the home, we know that we are accomplishing something worth while in the field of popular education.

The following letter from a school teacher is one of many of a similar character that we have received. It tells the story so far as schools are concerned:

"The fact that I am using your magazine in a high school of 225 pupils makes it difficult to answer all your questions exactly.

"All the pupils use The Mentor and eagerly look forward to its coming. I believe, among the students, we hear most of the topics on Nature and Science, but when we see how delighted they are over the Literary numbers; how they enjoy to read about History, Biography and Travel; and how their hungry little minds feed upon the Art and Music numbers, I am at a loss to say which one our 'family' of 225 enjoys most. *We just like all of every number.*

ELIZABETH B. RUPP."